

## **City of San Antonio Code: Regulating the Care and Control of Animals**

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### **Leashing and Control.**

All dogs and cats must be confined to their owner's property at all times except when on a leash. Animal Care Officers have the legal authority to enter unenclosed front yards of private property to impound unrestrained animals.

### **Rabies Vaccination.**

All dogs, cats and domestic ferrets must be vaccinated against rabies by sixteen (16) weeks of age by a licensed veterinarian. Booster vaccinations are required by State, County and City law one year following the initial rabies vaccination and then at one or three year intervals depending on the vaccine used.. Other vaccinations are highly recommended. Ask your veterinarian.

### **Licensing.**

All dogs, cats and domestic ferrets must be licensed by sixteen (16) weeks of age and annually thereafter with the City of San Antonio, Animal Care Services Division. Proof of current rabies vaccination must be demonstrated when the license is issued. Dogs must wear license tags on their collar at all times when outside.

- License fees are not required for government owned working dogs or dogs properly trained to guide or otherwise assist a physically handicapped person.
- No person may use any pet license for any dog other than the pet for which it was issued.

### **Pet Ownership.**

It is unlawful to own more than five dogs or three cats (10 cats if confined within a structure) on a residential lot smaller than 10,000 square feet in San Antonio.

### **Strays.**

The City Code defines an owner of an animal as a person or the legal guardian of the person who feeds or harbors the subject animal for more than 72 hours without the presence of the subject animal being recorded in the records of the Animal Care Services Division of the Health District as a stray animal.

### **Animal Bites.**

All animal bites and scratches which have broken the skin must be reported to the Animal Care Services Division within 24 hours by calling 737-1600 anytime day or night. Biting animals are required by State, County and City law to be quarantined for rabies observation for 10 days from the date of the bite, regardless of the vaccination status of the animal.

### **Prohibited Species.**

It is unlawful to keep wild animals and many other species within the City of San Antonio. Such animals include monkeys and other non-human primates, wolf hybrids, coyotes, foxes, exotic cats, bears, skunks, raccoons, miniature Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs, poisonous reptiles, crocodiles and related species.

### **Abandoned Animals.**

It is unlawful to abandon an animal within the City Limits. An abandoned animal is any animal that has not been provided with one or more of the necessities of life including air, water, food, veterinary care, exercise or protection from the sun and other elements of nature for 24 hours.

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### **Poultry and Fowl.**

Poultry shall mean quail, pheasants, chickens, prairie chickens, peacocks, guineas, ducks and turkeys. It shall be unlawful to keep or maintain any poultry on a single lot above the following limits:

- Five (5) poultry confined to a pen 20 ft. from another dwelling.
- Twelve (12) poultry confined to a pen 50 ft. from another dwelling.
- Fifty (50) poultry confined to a pen 150 ft. from another dwelling.

### **Pigeons.**

It shall be unlawful to keep or maintain any pigeons in the City above the following limits:

- Ten (10) pigeons confined in pen 20 ft. from another dwelling.
- Fifty (50) pigeons confined in a pen 35 ft. from another dwelling.
- One hundred (100) pigeons confined in a pen 50 ft. from another dwelling.
- One hundred fifty pigeons confined in a pen 100 ft. from another dwelling.
- Any number of pigeons confined in a pen 150 ft. from another dwelling.

### **Rabbits or combination of rabbits and poultry.**

It shall be unlawful to keep or maintain any rabbits or combination of rabbits and poultry on any premises within the City above the following limits:

- Ten (10) rabbits and poultry confined in a pen 20 ft. from another dwelling.
- Twenty-five (25) rabbits and poultry in a pen 50 ft. from another dwelling.
- One hundred (100) of these species in a pen 150 ft. from another dwelling.

### **Rodent breeder license.**

Any person that breeds and or engages in the feeding or care of more than fifteen (15) adult mammals (other than dogs or cats) that do not normally exceed fifteen pounds at maturity including white rats, gerbils, guinea pigs, chinchillas and hamsters must obtain a license from the Director of Health.

### **Non-poisonous snakes.**

Any owner, care-taker, or other person who keeps any non-poisonous snake over three (3) feet and/or fifteen (15) pounds must keep the snake at all times in an enclosure which will preclude the possibility of escape; maintain the enclosure in a clean and sanitary condition; provide adequate husbandry; keep the snake in a manner so as not to threaten or annoy any person of normal sensitivity; prevent unauthorized access to the snake; use only escape proof enclosures when transporting the snake.

### **Permits Required for Animal Shows and Exhibits Other than a Dog or Cat Show.**

Any operator of a circus, rodeo, animal exhibit, or entertainment show, or other persons desiring to bring any non-aquatic mammal into the City to use in a circus, rodeo, animal exhibit or animal show other than a dog show or a cat show shall first submit a written request to the animal control veterinarian for a permit and pay a permit application fee of \$75 to cover the cost of inspecting the facility. The permit may cover any number of consecutive days. Permit application shall be submitted at least twenty days prior to the event.

Permits are not required for any animal so long as it is kept in a governmentally owned and operated facility, public operated facility, public zoological park, or bona fide medical or research institution.

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### **Pet Shop Licenses.**

A pet shop shall mean a business establishment whether licensed or not by the City health department, where two (2) or more species of animals including dogs, cats, fish, birds, reptiles or rodents are kept for sale or commercial barter. The pet shop must apply for an annual permit from the Director of Health. The pet shop will be inspected for public health and safety, sanitation, animal husbandry standards, prohibited animals and transaction records.

### **Sale of animals.**

No live animals shall be sold, traded, bartered, leased, rented, given away, or displayed for a commercial purpose on any roadside, public right-of-way, commercial parking lot or at any flea market or festival.

### **Dog Kennels and Catteries Licenses.**

Kennel (Cattery) shall mean any place other than a veterinary hospital where the property owner, tenant, or occupant keeps or allows others to keep or board any dog (cat) for longer than twelve (12) hours for a fee or donation or non-monetary reward.

No person shall operate a kennel or a cattery without first obtaining a permit from the Director of Health. Such permit shall be issued after inspection and approval of the facilities, taking into consideration the type of construction as it relates to sanitation, the health and welfare of the animals and related to zoning regulations. Permits must be obtained annually.

### **Non-livestock Animal Waste; Sanitation Standards.**

Animal owners shall collect and dispose of animal waste in methods prescribed by the Animal Code to prevent odor and attraction of pests. Summary abatement may be directed by the Director of Health and/or the director of code compliance.

An animal owner or keeper shall not walk his/her animals without a leash restraint, and shall not guide or take animals onto the yards or driveways of property not owned, leased or occupied by the animal owner for the purpose of allowing the animal to defecate, but shall keep his/her animal in the public right-of-way, and shall carry a container and scooper for the sanitary removal of his/her animal's fecal matter from the public right-of-way adjacent to any property with a structure or other improvement thereon.

### **Dangerous Animals.**

Upon receipt of an affidavit of complaint signed by one or more individuals, made under oath before a notary public, the Animal Care Services Division staff will investigate the complaint of a dangerous animal. The owner has the right to provide an affidavit in defense of the animal. If the investigator determines that impoundment of the animal is a reasonable precaution until the matter is resolved, the Animal Care Veterinarian may order immediate seizure.

Upon a timely submitted written notice to the owner of the animal being investigated, a dangerous animal determination hearing will be scheduled by the Director of Health. A dangerous animal determination board will review the facts of the affidavits and subsequent investigation and hear evidence offered by the owner of the animal. A written determination will be given to the animal owner within five days. If the animal is declared dangerous, the owner has five days to appeal the board's decision to the Municipal Court for an administrative hearing.

A dangerous animal must be annually licensed as a dangerous animal by the Animal Care Services Division; wear a collar approved by the Animal Care Veterinary Services Manager at all times; be kept in a proper enclosure; have a file at the Health Department with a certificate of public liability insurance for \$100,000 which will be kept continuously in effect; be muzzled and leashed when out of the enclosure; be identified with a microchip; and be spayed/neutered.

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**Livestock.**

Livestock shall mean any horse, stallion, mare, gelding, filly, colt, mule, hinny, jennet, hog, sheep, goat, llama, or head of any species of cattle. It shall be unlawful to keep or maintain swine within the City other than for the purposes and at the following locations:

- exhibition at stock shows, fairs and circuses;
- at vocational schools with properly constructed facilities;
- slaughtering establishments;
- when offered for sale at union stockyards or adjacent auction barns;
- under limited approved and permitted conditions at the home of FFA or 4-H enrollees under the direct supervision of the county agricultural agent.

Permits must be obtained from the Director of Health and are required for any person to keep bovines, equines, sheep and/or goats and are issued only under the following requirements:

- not more than two (2) of such animals on any premises in a pen 100 ft. from another dwelling;
- not more than four (4) of such animals on any premises in a pen 150 ft. from another dwelling;
- five or more animals may be kept on areas of at least five acres;
- a minimum of 400 sq. ft. of pen of which 100 sq. ft. must be covered is required for each animal.

It shall be the duty of the Director of Health to have livestock found running at large in the City limits to be impounded at the public stockyards in the City.